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Silent Friend,

Yesterday, performing the simple, unexacting chore of pouring a pail of water in the humidifier, I kick my lumbosacral disorder into painful orbit for the first time in six to eight months. This makes many normal things uncongenial, more so when I first arise. As I watched the coffee perk I wondered what to do until I limber up a bit. Why Tom popped into my mind, I do not know, but he did.

It then occurred to me that possibly you might have some guilt feelings about him, having recommended him initially, according to Penn, who gave me this character for him when, so long ago, I expressed misgivings to him. If this is the case, be at ease, for that had nothingxto do with it. Your conscience should be clear.

If, aside from Jim, anyone is to blame, it may be me. When Tom told me he had done all he could in the Archives, he asked me to recommend to Jim that he hire Tom for research in the office. With this experience in the Archives, that struck me as a fine idea and I made the recommendation. It may or may not have influenced Jim. In retrospect, it seems to me I should have first made some effort to learn what Tom had accomplished in the Archives. I did not. I assumed he had done what any student could have done, what Gary and Paul, both so much younger and less experienced, have done so well. Later, I learned that his time there was almost entirely wasted. I spent what for me is a young fortune after my December trip to N.O. trying to make up this deficiency.

From time to time I have had reasons to suspect Tom and I have communicated them to Louis. These go back to well past the point of his treachery. Louis, I learned, had his own doubts. When, finally, I confronted him, he said he had made this recommendation to Jim and Jim just didn't fire people. I raised the question repeatedly, each time I had new reason. For example, last October I learned from one of Thornley's friends that Tom was helping them. In Jult I learned that he had helped Epstein. As recently as December, pointing out that he and Boxley had shared the same office without either suspecting the other, I asked how he could be permitted to remain. Then, in January, I asked if he could still be tolerated with trial so close. So, it is not your fault. Perhaps you have not considered that it is. But my cheif purpose in writing is so thatxyou would not .

Since leaving New Orleans I have copyrighted three limited editions, the initial book on the autopsy, the one I did ~~xxxxxx~~ beginning while I was there in January and COUP D'ETAT. I have almost completed an appendix for each, to contain the annotated documentation upon which each is based.

Unfortunately, the hip-shooting continues. There were two perjuries in Shaw's testimony with which he was charged. Thisx is not because the proof was not at hand. I had, for other reasons, not anticipating he would take the stand and lie under oath, delivered it and it is in the files. When I wrote Jim to remind him, after Shaw was charged (something I again did not anticipate at this early date), I attributed this to the fact that Alexander Graham Bell has not yet been born (I perhaps should have said Tom Anoche). There is other, more glaring perjury, this I did communicate and I did phone in advance about it. To no avail. I have yet to hear from any of them. Whatx they needlessly missed, including on Shaw, you will never, fully, know. The incompetence was professional, thoroughly so.

They do not teach it in school, but New Orleans is the southernmost range of the lemming.

For whatever it is worth to you, entirely aside from Jim, I have been and remain convinced that Shaw had an involvement. With what I know and what I have had reason to suspect, even the nature of Dymond's cross-examination affirm this. I have read the Q and As as they appeared in the N.O. papers and the points Dymond came right up to and then skirted, without detection though they are obvious, are persuasive to me. Dymond also knows. It is discouraging that none of my bretheren on the spot could detect this as it is that the cross examination was so disspirited and lackluster, though by then there was every reason for discouragement by the lawyers.

If the Q and As as printed are at all close to accurate and complete, then nothing new came out about the assassination and its investigation. Oser did make excellent use of what I brought to light in POST MORTEM, the first book on the autopsy, done in August 1967, in his questioning of Finck. Vince, fortunately, was familiar with it (he read it last summer and said it is the most important book that far - the one he said he had to get published then forgot about). John Nichols had it and the documentation behind it the previous winter. Oser and Alford are among those I gave copies to 1/20/69. The one thing they added is the name of Admiral Kinney. This is discouraging. More, they have Finck dead to rights on perjury and in a context that enables them to call each of the autopsy doctors and each of the panel finks as witnesses, subjecting each to the hazard of perjury. It is so clear, so logical, so all-one-way, I am convinced they will not do it. The only other data on the autopsy that came out in the trial is what I developed beginning when I was with you this last trip, from the data Clark supplied in response to the action in court in Washington, given to Vince, Bertel and Wecht, who used it magnificently in court in Washington. And they had the transcript in New Orleans. So, the only really new information we developed is a direct consequence of inconceivable irresposibility on Jim's part in suppeneeing the pictures and X-rays of the autopsy when I knew and told him there was no chain of possession and we could not validate them any more than the government could, and the equally inconceivable stupidity of Clark in giving me a description of their contents. The one thing in all of this that commends respect is the brilliant use of semantics in the two reports produced in Washington. They fooled even the government lawyers, who never did understand what they say. They are a great plus for us and make the New Orleans fiasco, a real disaster in terms of what could have been adduced (Shaw never could have been convicted, for had he been the case had to be reversed on appeal for what those on "our side" have done that in reality denied him his rights), a positive step far forward. The immediate effect is very bad.

A woman who was associated with the Detrick vigil now has some free time. I am going to ask her to transcribe those of your Memphis notes I have. I will then return them and a copy of her transcript. I would like to borrow what I didn't get for the same purpose. It now looks as though some of the influential and responsible blacks are getting interested. It seems to me that I made a tape with you about the radio bit. I cannot find it. If you can find the time, I'd very much appreciate it if you could put this on paper for me. I'd like to add that as an appendix to COUP and I'd like it for a record. I have not lost interest in the New Philadelphia pucture, for the stated purpose, in the event this book can be printed. I think the entire picture is an appropriate replacement of a dedication.

Again my thanks for your many kindnesses and tolerances. Please remember me to everyone, especially Carol and Betsy.

Best regards,

Harold